

PTO/PCT Rec'd 14 DEC 2001

FORM PTO-1390 (REV. 9-2001)		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE	ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER 60,425-012
TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US) CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371			U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 CFR 1.5) 10/018299
INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/US00/17426	INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE 23 June 2000	PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED 24 June 1999	
TITLE OF INVENTION Information Distribution System			
APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US Jerold I. Zwas			
Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This is a FIRST submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371. 2. <input type="checkbox"/> This is a SECOND or SUBSEQUENT submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371. 3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This is an express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)). The submission must include items (5), (6), (9) and (21) indicated below. 4. <input type="checkbox"/> The US has been elected by the expiration of 19 months from the priority date (Article 31). 5. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <input type="checkbox"/> is attached hereto (required only if not communicated by the International Bureau). b. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> has been communicated by the International Bureau. c. <input type="checkbox"/> is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US). 6. <input type="checkbox"/> An English language translation of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <input type="checkbox"/> is attached hereto. b. <input type="checkbox"/> has been previously submitted under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4). 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <input type="checkbox"/> are attached hereto (required only if not communicated by the International Bureau). b. <input type="checkbox"/> have been communicated by the International Bureau. c. <input type="checkbox"/> have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired. d. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> have not been made and will not be made. 8. <input type="checkbox"/> An English language translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(3)). 9. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)). 10. <input type="checkbox"/> An English language translation of the annexes of the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)). 			
Items 11 to 20 below concern document(s) or information included:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. 12. <input type="checkbox"/> An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included. 13. <input type="checkbox"/> A FIRST preliminary amendment. 14. <input type="checkbox"/> A SECOND or SUBSEQUENT preliminary amendment. 15. <input type="checkbox"/> A substitute specification. 16. <input type="checkbox"/> A change of power of attorney and/or address letter. 17. <input type="checkbox"/> A computer-readable form of the sequence listing in accordance with PCT Rule 13ter.2 and 35 U.S.C. 1.821 - 1.825. 18. <input type="checkbox"/> A second copy of the published international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4). 19. <input type="checkbox"/> A second copy of the English language translation of the international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4). 20. <input type="checkbox"/> Other items or information: 			

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (if known, see 37 CFR 1.5) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/US00/17426	ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER 60,425-012
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21. ☒ The following fees are submitted:

BASIC NATIONAL FEE (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (1) - (5)):

Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482)
 nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO
 and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO \$1040.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to
 USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO \$890.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO
 but international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$740.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO
 but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$710.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO
 and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$100.00

ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =

Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than ☐ 20 ☐ 30
 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).

CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE	\$	
Total claims	6 - 20 =		x \$18.00	\$	
Independent claims	2 - 3 =		x \$84.00	\$	
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM(S) (if applicable)			+ \$280.00	\$	
TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =				\$ 710.00	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicant claims small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27. The fees indicated above are reduced by 1/2.				+	\$ 355.00
SUBTOTAL -				\$ 355.00	
Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English translation later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).				\$	
TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =				\$ 355.00	
Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property +				\$	
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =				\$ 355.00	
				Amount to be refunded:	\$
				charged:	\$

CALCULATIONS PTO USE ONLY

a. ☒ A check in the amount of \$ 355.00 to cover the above fees is enclosed.

b. ☐ Please charge my Deposit Account No. 50-1482 in the amount of \$ _____ to cover the above fees.
A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

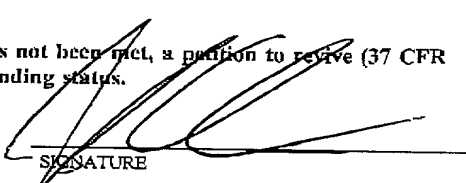
c. ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any
overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1482. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

d. ☐ Fees are to be charged to a credit card. **WARNING:** Information on this form may become public. Credit card
information should not be included on this form. Provide credit card information and authorization on PTO-2038.

NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137 (a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.

SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

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 REGISTRATION NUMBER

-1-

INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 The present invention relates to the distribution of information on computer networks, such as the internet. More particularly, the present invention provides an application with an information window integrated within a utility bar and/or menu of the application and which displays information independent of the information displayed within the main application window.

10 One current prevalent information distribution system for the internet is an email-based system. A user first visits a website and indicates the information the user would like to receive, such as announcements or reminders regarding selected topics. The website then sends periodic emails to the user, based upon the topics selected.

Another customized information distribution system for the internet is website-based. A user visits the website and selects topics of interest (such as news topics).
15 When the user returns to the site, announcements and news stories regarding the selected topics are displayed.

These systems both require the user to actively retrieve the information, either by retrieving and opening email or by visiting his customized website. Further, these systems do not match information from third parties to the users based upon profile
20 information of the user.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides an information distribution system including an application with an information window integrated within a utility bar and/or
25 menu of the application and which displays information independent of the information displayed within the main application window. In one preferred embodiment, the application is an internet browser.

In the present invention, information from third parties is matched with user profile information and then selectively distributed to users based upon this match.

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The information appears in the information window, independently of any information displayed in the main application window. For example, an announcement will be displayed in the information window on the utility and/or menu bar of the browser, while the user is visiting unrelated websites in the main application window. Preferably, at least some messages include embedded hot links which instruct the web browser to retrieve the associated web site.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Other advantages of the present invention will be readily appreciated as the same becomes better understood by reference to the following detailed description when considered in connection with the accompanying drawings wherein:

Figure 1 schematically illustrates the present invention implemented in a computer network, such as the internet;

Figure 2 illustrates the information window of the present invention as integrated with an application program; and

Figure 3 illustrates the information flow among some of the components of Figure 1.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Figure 1 schematically illustrates one implementation of the present invention for use on a computer network 20, such as the internet. The invention could also be utilized on an intranet, extranet, or the worldwide web. This is shown for illustrative purposes only, as there are numerous other arrangements possible, as is well known.

The computer network 20 includes a user's computer 21 having a CPU 22 including output devices, such as a monitor 24, and input devices, such as a keyboard 26 and mouse 28. The CPU 22 includes communication hardware, such as a modem 30, connecting the CPU 22 (via phone lines 32) to an internet service provider or ISP 34. The ISP 34 provides information between the CPU 22 and the computer network 36, in this case the internet 36, in a known manner. The internet 36 includes numerous

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inter-connected computers or sites 38 and 40. For example, site 38 could be a portal site 38, such as www.netscape.com or www.excite.com. The sites 40 comprise any site that the user of CPU 22 can visit via the internet 36. The computer network 20 further includes additional user computers 21a, 21b (functionally identical to user computer 21) also connected to the internet 36 via ISP 34 or another ISP 34a. The operation of computers 21a, 21b is identical to that of user computer 21, described below.

The computer network 20 as described above is known. In the improvement to the known computer network 20 in accordance with a first embodiment of the present, the computer network 20 further includes site 42, which sends information via the internet 36 and ISP 34 to the CPU 22 independently of the current site being visited by the user of the CPU 22. This will be described in more detail below. This information is preferably received via the internet 24 from "partner" sites 43a-d, which are described in more detail below.

Figure 2 illustrates an application 50 operating on computer 21, which in this example is a web browser 50. The application 50 could also be a word-processing program, spreadsheet, database, or any application, but preferably an application having windows, menus and toolbars, such as a browser (e.g. Microsoft Internet Explorer, Netscape or America On Line's browser) or other software application (e.g. Microsoft Word, or Microsoft Excel).

If the application 50 is a web browser 50, it may comprise Microsoft Internet Explorer, as shown, Netscape or AOL web browser. Other than as specifically explained below, the web browser 50 is identical to these existing, commercially available products. In fact, the improvement provided by the present invention would preferably be implemented by way of a "plug-in" or upgrade of these existing products.

As is known, the web browser 50 includes numerous screen objects, including a menu bar 52 including menu items 53, a utility bar 54 including buttons 55, and an address field 56. The web browser 50 further includes a main application window 58 dedicated solely to providing information from the site currently visited (such as sites

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38 or 40 in Figure 1) as indicated in the address field 56. As is common, the menu bar 52, utility bar 54 and address field 56 are positioned at the top of the web browser 50 and extend laterally completely across the web browser 50. The web browser 50 includes a scroll bar 60 along the right edge of the web browser 50, as is well known.

5 Further, other screen objects are well known and could be utilized in the web browser 50 as well.

Often, the right portion of the menu bar 52 and utility bar 54 is not utilized in the existing, commercially available web browsers 50. Although, the menu items 53 and buttons 55 can be customized by the user, they usually fit in the left portion of the display 24, leaving the right portions of the menu bar 52 and utility bar 54 available.
10 In the web browser 50 of the present invention, however, an information window 62 is integrated into the web browser 50 in the right portions of the menu bar 52 and utility bar 54. In the present invention, information displayed in the information window 62 is completely independent of the site visited as indicated in the address field 56 and
15 displayed in the window 58.

Figure 3 illustrates the information flow among some of the components of Figure 1. The partner sites 43a-d provide information 70, which each includes a message 72 and message profile 74. The messages 72 (one shown) may be announcements, news items, reminders, advertisements, or event-based notices. Each
20 message 72 is associated with a message profile 74. The message profile 74 indicates which types of users may be interested in the associated message 72. For example, the message profile 74 may indicate interests, hobbies, news topics, stock symbols, etc. The information 70, including the plurality of messages 72 and associated message profiles 74, is stored in a database 76 on site 42.

25 The site 42 further includes a database 80 comprising a plurality of user profiles 82, 82a-b each associated with a different user 21, 21a-b, respectively. The user profiles 82, 82a-b include personalized information from each user indicating data about the user, such as age, sex, interests, and preferences regarding information the user would like to receive, such as news topics, stock quotes, sports, sports teams, etc.

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The user profiles 82, 82 a-b are compiled in several ways. First, the user fills out a short questionnaire when initiating this service. Second, the user can add, delete or modify information in his profile on site 42. Further, the site 42 may also gather data based upon monitoring the activity of the user, such as visiting sites on the internet 36 or based upon responses to previous messages.

A matching processor 84 compares the message profile 74 associated with each message 72 with the user profiles 82, 82a-b of each user. Based upon this comparison, the messages 72 are selectively addressed to specific users 21, 21a-b and placed in the staging area 86. Once the message 72 is in the staging area 86, the site 42 sends the message 72 to the selected users via the internet and/or ISP 34. The site 42 further includes a billing module 90 that tracks the messages 72 sent and hits on any links in the message 72 and bills the partner sites 43a-d via the internet 36.

As shown in Figure 3, the user's computer includes a message stack 96 which stores a plurality of messages 72a-c that have been sent from the staging area 86. The message stack 96 controls which messages 72a-c are displayed in information window 62 (Figure 1). The messages 72a-c are displayed one-by-one and preferably vary in priority and cycle rates based upon information in the messages 72a-c.

The operation of the invention will be described below. Independently of any site being visited by user computer 21 on the internet 36 (or any application being run by computer 21, if the application is not a web browser), the information in information window 62 is controlled by site 42 on the internet 36. Preferably, the information in the information window 62 provides embedded links which when activated instruct the web browser 50 (specifically, the address field 56 and window 58) to retrieve the linked site on the network 20 which is related to the message in information window 62.

The number of times links in the information window 62 are activated for each message that may be displayed ("hits") may be recorded by site 42. The revenue obtained by the site 42 from the partners 43 may be related to the number of hits generated. Known techniques can be used to monitor the sites visited and modify user

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profiles 82 based upon the sites 38, 40 visited by the user. Additionally, the partner sites 43 provide reminders, notifications or news updates to the user in the information window 62 and provide links associated with the reminders or news updates. For example, the user could set up the reminders or notifications by first visiting the partner sites 43 via the web browser 50. The reminders are preferably event-driven, where the sites 43 watch for the indicated events and trigger the reminder into the information window 62 based upon the occurrence of the event. For example, notification or reminders can be triggered to stock prices which are monitored by the site 43. Additionally, some notifications, reminders and set-up could be provided by the site 42.

In accordance with the provisions of the patent statutes and jurisprudence, exemplary configurations described above are considered to represent a preferred embodiment of the invention. However, it should be noted that the invention can be practiced otherwise than as specifically illustrated and described without departing from its spirit or scope. For example, the website 42 could be the ISP 34. In the method claims below, alphanumeric identifiers are for convenience in referencing steps in dependent claims and do not signify an order of performance of the steps unless otherwise stated.

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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A computer including an application window containing first information and having an associated utility bar and/or menu bar, an information window integrated into the utility bar and/or menu bar and displaying second information
5 independently of the first information displayed in the application window.

2. The computer of claim 1 wherein the application window is for navigating a computer network and wherein the information window displays information independently of a node on the computer network currently being visited by the computer program.

10 3. The computer of claim 2 wherein information displayed in the information window is received via a computer network.

4. The computer of claim 3 wherein the information displayed in the information window includes a hot link to a node on the computer network.

15 5. A method for sending information on a computer network including the steps of:

- a) compiling personal profiles for each of a plurality of subscribers;
- b) receiving a plurality of notices via the computer network, each notice including associated interest criteria;
- c) comparing each interest criteria with each personal profile; and
- 20 d) selectively sending the plurality of notices via the computer network to the plurality of subscribers based upon said step c).

25 6. The method of claim 5 further including the step of displaying at least one of the notices in an information window integrated into a utility bar and/or menu bar of a computer application and displaying second information in an associated application window independently of the displayed notice.

1/3

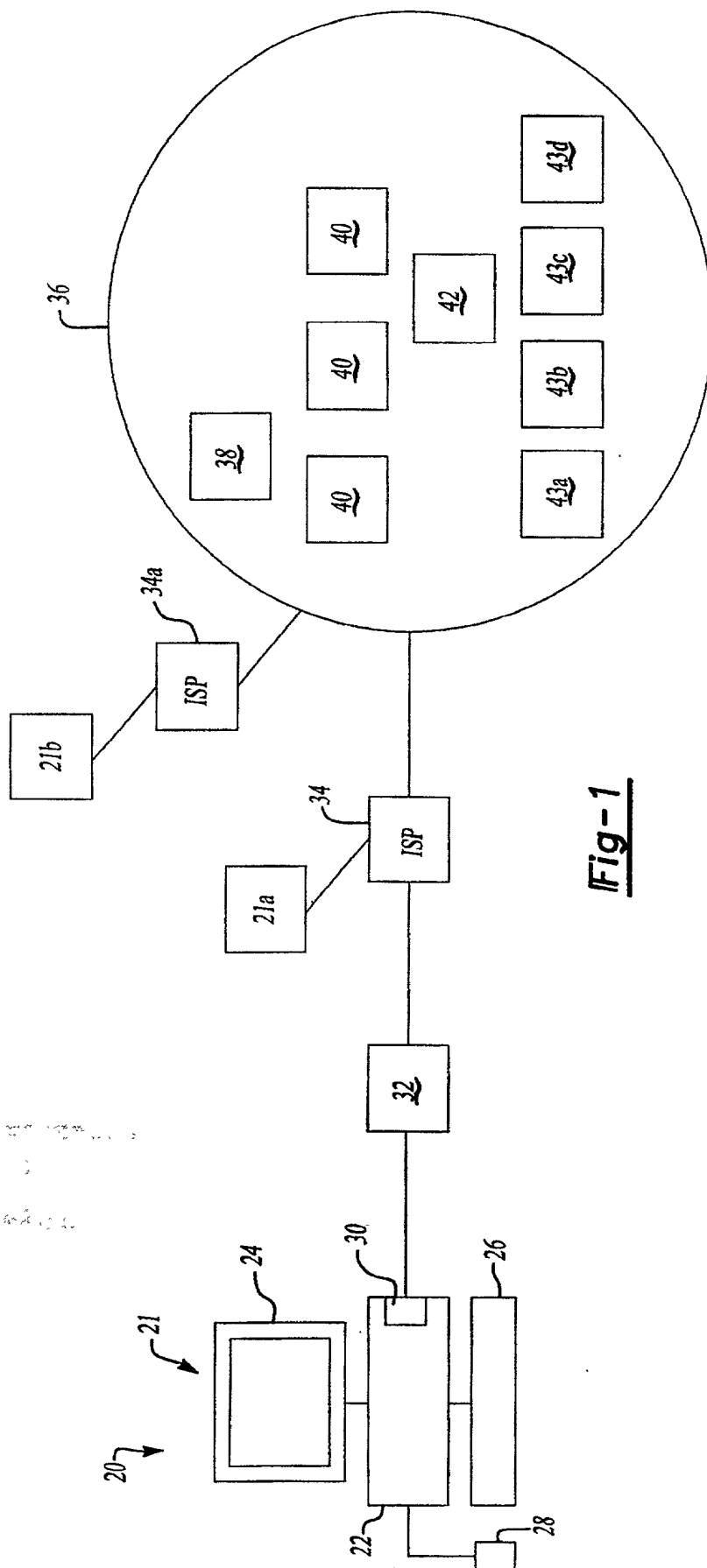
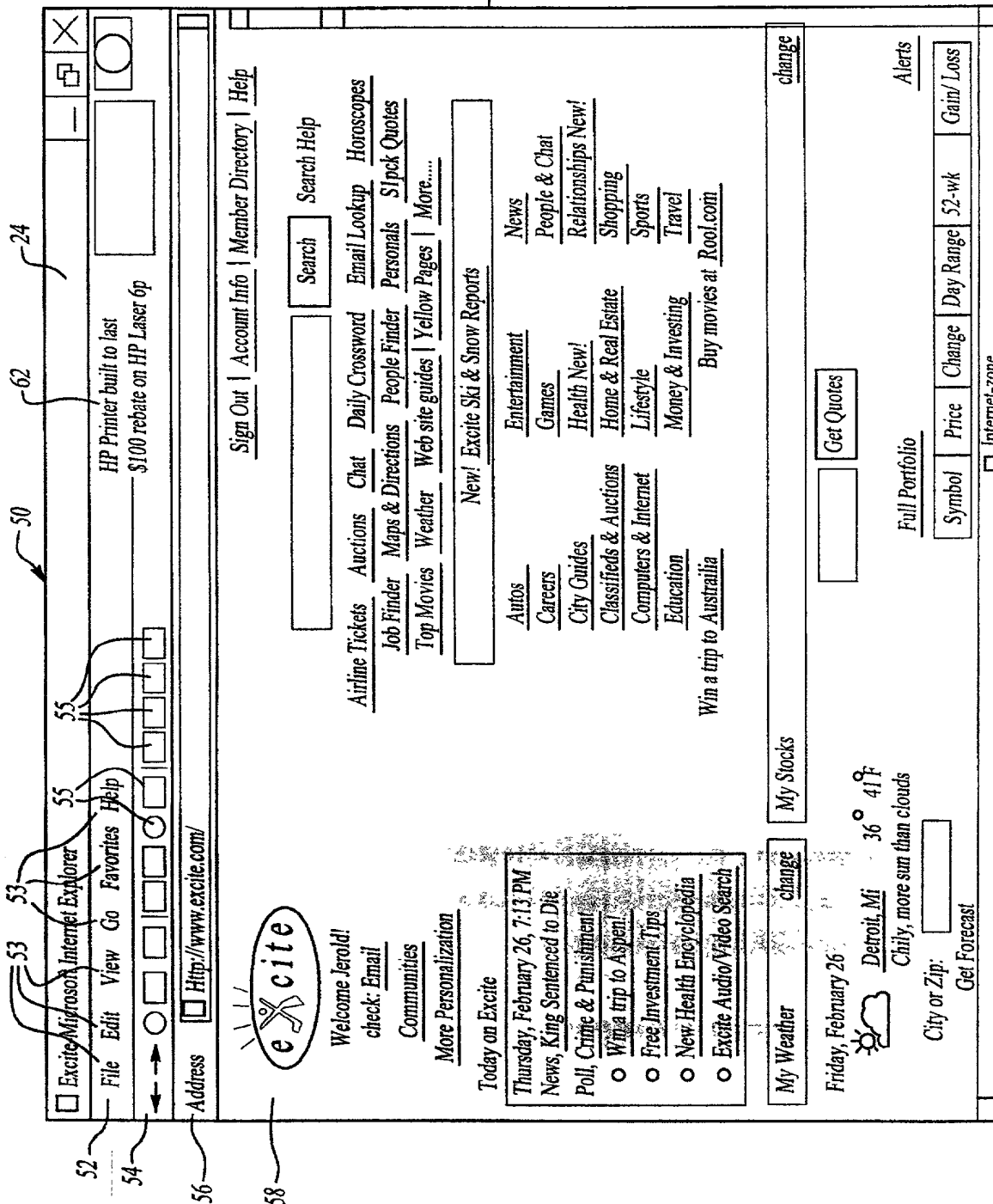


Fig-1

Fig-2



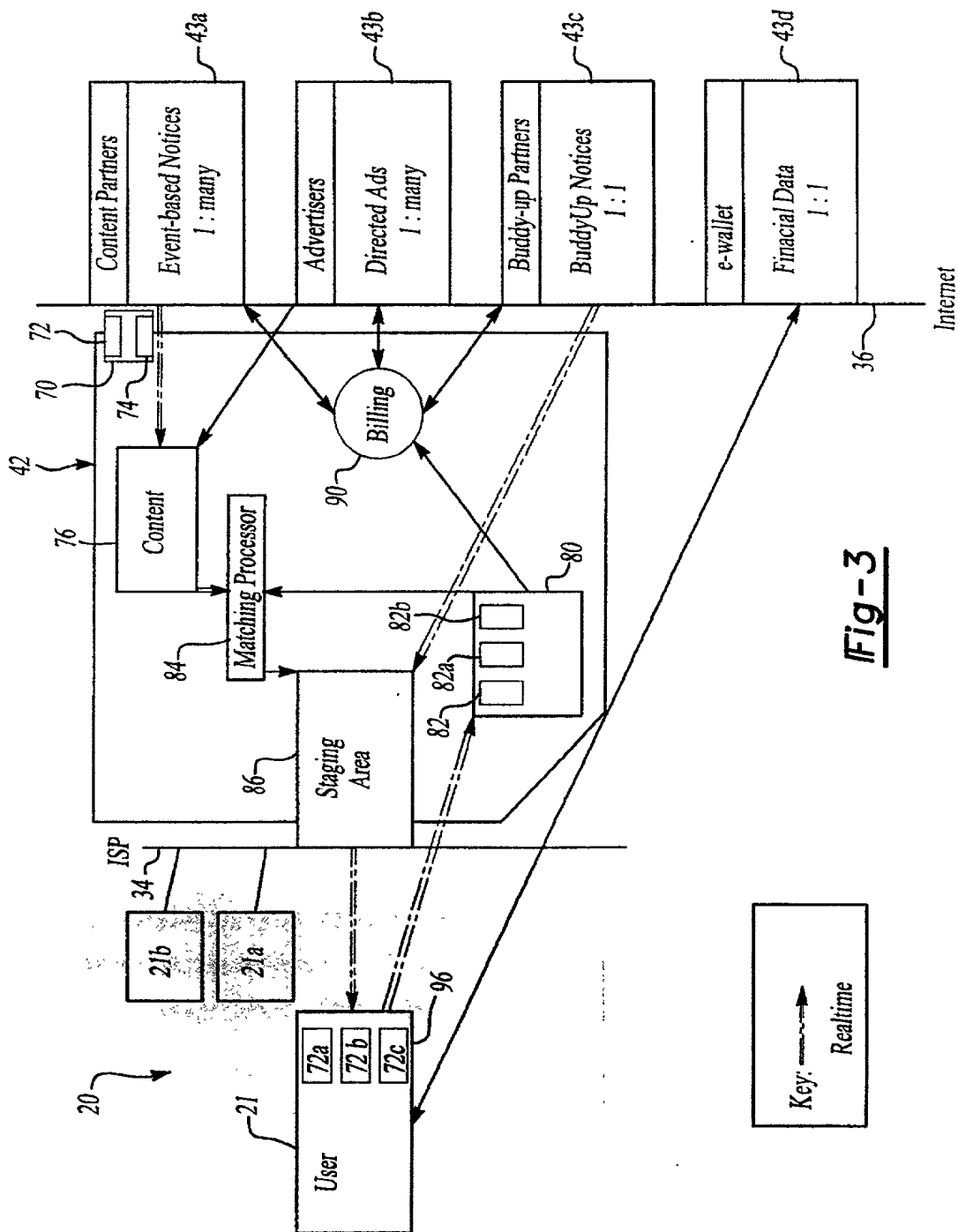


Fig-3

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Approved for use through 10/31/2002. OMB 0651-0032
U S Patent and Trademark Office; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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DECLARATION FOR UTILITY OR DESIGN PATENT APPLICATION (37 CFR 1.63) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Declaration Submitted with Initial Filing OR <input type="checkbox"/> Declaration Submitted after Initial Filing (surcharge (37 CFR 1.16 (e)) required)	Attorney Docket Number	60,425-012
	First Named Inventor	Jerold I. Zwas
	COMPLETE IF KNOWN	
	Application Number	/
	Filing Date	Herewith
	Group Art Unit	
	Examiner Name	

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, mailing address, and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

(Title of the Invention)

the specification of which

☒ is attached hereto

OR

☐ was filed on (MM/DD/YYYY)

as United States Application Number or PCT International

Application Number

and was amended on (MM/DD/YYYY)

(if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment specifically referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR 1.56, including for continuation-in-part applications, material information which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of the continuation-in-part application.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d) or 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or 365(a) of any PCT international application which designated at least one country other than the United States of America, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or any PCT international application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior Foreign Application Number(s)	Country	Foreign Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Priority Not Claimed	Certified Copy Attached?	
				YES	NO
PCT/US00/17426	WO	June 23, 2000	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

☐ Additional foreign application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto:

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

Application Number(s)	Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional provisional application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto.
60/140,911	June 24, 1999	

[Page 1 of 2]

Burden Hour Statement This form is estimated to take 21 minutes to complete. Time will vary depending upon the needs of the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you are required to complete this form should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231

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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under 18 U.S.C. 1001 and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

NAME OF SOLE OR FIRST INVENTOR:

☐ A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor

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Family Name or Surname Zwas

Inventor's Signature

Date 12/14/01

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☐ A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor

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Family Name or Surname

Inventor's Signature

Date

Residence: City

State

Country

Citizenship

Mailing Address

Mailing Address

City

State

ZIP

Country

☐ Additional inventors are being named on the _____ supplemental Additional Inventor(s) sheet(s) PTO/SB/02A attached hereto.

